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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [GG](#) [RU](#) [WA](#)

SUBJECT: RUSSIAN RECOGNITION OF S. OSSETIA AND ABKHAZIA:
NAMIBIA NON-COMMITTAL

REF: STATE 91894

Classified By: Ambassador Dennise Mathieu for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) DCM delivered reftel talking points on August 27 to MFA Director for Bilateral Affairs Wilbard Hellao. He underscored our strong concern over Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, noting the move was inconsistent with previous UNSC resolutions (which Russia had voted in favor of) and the six-point ceasefire agreement brokered by President Sarkozy. The DCM added that Russia's actions were likely to exacerbate tensions in the region and complicate diplomatic efforts. He encouraged the Government of Namibia (GRN) to issue a public statement critical of Moscow's recognition of the two Georgian territories.

¶2. (C) Hellao made no commitments regarding a public statement, saying only that the GRN was engaged in "internal consultations" on the matter, and that he would get back to us once those were completed. He added that, by his count, there were currently some 200 "global hotspots" involving secessionist movements, and the GRN was concerned about any developments that established a precedent. The recognition of Kosovo, he commented, had done exactly that. The DCM pushed back firmly, explaining why we believed the Kosovo situation was unique (genocide, followed by a long period of UN administration and UN-brokered final status negotiations.)

¶3. (C) Comment: We think it unlikely the GRN will issue a public statement in support of Georgia because of historical ties and solidarity with Russia. At the same time, the GRN is unlikely to follow Russia's lead in recognizing South Ossetia and Abkhazia, given Namibia's recent experience with a secessionist uprising in the Caprivi Strip and a desire to avoid establishment of precedents viewed as unhelpful in Namibia's domestic context. That is why the government has not recognized Kosovo's independence.

MATHIEU